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Educating and Engaging Along Life's Journey

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Educating and Engaging Along Life's Journey

Intercommunity Action, Inc., Journey's Way

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Mary Kate McGinty, RPh, MS, University of the Sciences

Community Preceptors

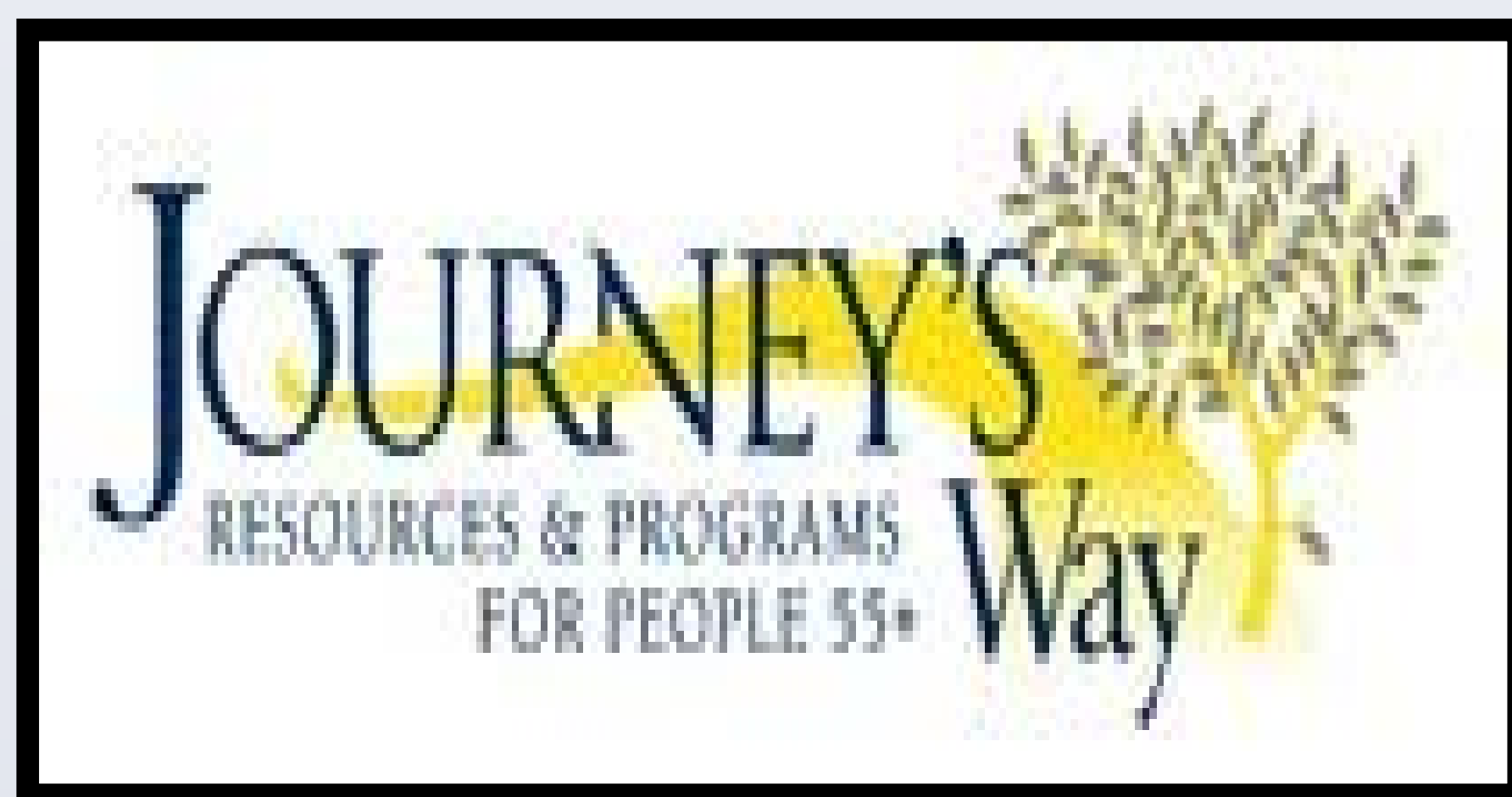
Rebecca Kochman, MSW, and Ashley Harker, CTRS, Intercommunity Action, Inc., Journey's Way

Bridging the Gap Focus Areas Adopted from HP 2010 & HP 2020

- Elder Health and Senior Quality of Life
- Health Communication
- Heart and Oral Health
- Vision

The Community Site

Journey's Way, the aging services department of Intercommunity Action, Inc., offers a wide array of programs and resources for people 55+ to enrich their lives in their communities and support them through life's challenges. The Center at Journey's Way offers social services and lifelong learning, health, fitness, volunteer, recreational, and travel programs for independent older adults. The Adult Day Services Center provides older adults who need supervision with an individualized program that includes lunch and snacks, recreation and socialization, and support for family caregivers



Project Goals and Objectives

The following were obtained with client and staff input and suggestions:

- To increase medical knowledge on various health topics & interests
- To promote health and wellness in the older adult population
- To encourage open discussions on important health issues
- To promote participation in educational and leisure activities



Methods and Activities

This summer, the BTG student interns had the opportunity to work with independent adults 55 and older at Journey's Way as well as older adults requiring supervision and assistance at the Adult Day Service Center. At Journey's Way, student interns presented a series of lectures on subjects such as heart and oral health, vision and driving, dementia and Alzheimer's, and mobility devices, with the intention of augmenting senior health. In addition, student interns ran a health literacy workshop, participated in roundtable discussions and senior activities, and distributed produce vouchers to community members. At the Adult Day Service Center, students engaged participants in activities such as photography, dance, arts and crafts, and karaoke.



Project Outcomes

Project success was measured by observing the clients:

- Ask questions and provide feedback during our weekly health education lectures
- Verbalize an understanding of our group session series by answering questions at the conclusion of our presentations
- Use resources we provided them to seek more information on health promoting activities
- Elicit positive verbal and non-verbal responses to various activities that we created



Personal Statements

Matt says, "Working with older adults this summer has allowed me to fine tune my communication skills within the senior population. With the baby boomer population aging, I know these skills will be invaluable as I begin my medical profession. I will look back fondly on the meaningful relationships I have made with many of the community members, and I hope that I've been able to provide them with as much personal growth as they've been able to provide me this summer."

Decorntae says, "Initially seven weeks sounded very long; but as the weeks progressed, I found myself not wanting this experience to end. I have enjoyed the countless stories and meaningful interactions with the community members. Working alongside older adults age 55 and older, with different needs, has allowed me to view aging from various perspectives and reinforced the concept of client centered care. In addition, the communication between my partner and me has taught me the importance of a team approach and how essential it is to combine our expertise to provide quality, comprehensive healthcare."



Acknowledgements

Matt and Decorntae would like to express their gratitude to the clients, staff, and Bridging the Gaps coordinators for their generosity and assistance throughout the summer. They wish them continued success in the future, and hope to remain in contact as they progress in their careers.